

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT
GLENN CUNNINGHAM LAKE
AQUATIC HABITAT RESTORATION PROJECT

Nebraska Game and Parks Commission Federal Assistance Project F-175-D

Introduction

This Finding of No Significant Impacts (FONSI) documents Fish and Wildlife Service's (Service) decision to adopt the U.S. Army Corp of Engineers (Corps) Final Environmental Assessment (EA) "Glenn Cunningham Lake Aquatic Habitat Restoration Project" to meet our National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) compliance requirements described below. The Service prepared this FONSI in accordance with the Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Act 16 U.S.C. Sec. 669 et. Seq., the Sport Fish Restoration Act 16 U.S.C. 777 – 777k and our procedures for NEPA compliance as it applies to the Federal Aid in the Wildlife Restoration Act and the Sport Fish Restoration Act.

The Nebraska Game and Parks Commission (NGPC), in cooperation with the City of Omaha, propose to construct an aquatic habitat restoration project at Glenn Cunningham Lake. The purpose of the project is to restore and maintain the recreational fishery in the lake by improving water quality; depth diversity; and littoral (shoreline) and wetland quality; and by developing a bass/panfish sport fisheries. The NGPC will assist in partially funding the Lake Cunningham restoration project through a Federal Assistance Grant #NE-F-175-D.

Glenn Cunningham Lake, constructed in the early 1970's is a 377-acre multipurpose flood control and recreation reservoir located on the northern edge of the City of Omaha in Douglas County, Nebraska. The reservoir is supplied primarily by the Little Papillion Creek and four small tributaries to the Little Papillion Creek. The Corps owns and operates the dam and the surrounding project lands; and leases the site to the City of Omaha, which administers and maintains the reservoir's recreational facilities.

Public Involvement

A public meeting/open house was held to provide information on the planned Glenn Cunningham Lake drawdown and restoration project. The meeting was held at the Benson Park Pavilion, 7028 Military Avenue, Omaha on Wednesday, March 29, 2006 from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. and was attended by 50 individuals. Public Notices were advertised in the Omaha World Herald for several weeks prior to the meeting. In addition, an informational article was published in the Outdoors Section of the Omaha newspaper. Those who attended were provided an opportunity to ask questions and express any concerns they may have had regarding the drawdown and restoration project. There were no objections to the drawdown and the overwhelming majority felt that the project was a good investment for the future of the reservoir.

The preferred action would consist of five main components. These components include: (1) modification of the reservoir outlet works to facilitate water level management, (2) sediment reshaping and removal to increase lake depth, create depth-diversity, and increase the reservoir lifespan, (3) shoreline re-grading and construction of in-lake structures to restore and protect reservoir shoreline and create aquatic habitat, (4) construction of small upstream water quality sediment traps, and (5) fish population renovation and restocking with desirable species.

One alternative to the preferred action, the No Federal Action alternative, was considered. The No Federal Action alternative was eliminated because nothing would be done to restore and maintain the recreational fishery or improve the condition of the aquatic ecosystem at Glenn Cunningham Lake.

The EA and comments received from other agencies have been used to determine whether the proposed action requires the preparation of an Environmental Impact Statement. All environmental, social, and economic factors which are relevant to the proposal were considered in the EA. These include, but are not limited to, threatened and endangered species, water quality, wetlands, fisheries, wildlife, prime farmland, flood storage capacity, and historic properties.

Adverse effects would include a temporary disruption of water-based recreational activities and temporary disturbance or displacement of local wildlife species during construction. No adverse impacts to threatened and endangered species are expected as a result of the proposed project. Erosion control methods would be utilized during construction, to further minimize impacts to the environment.

The Service distributed a 15 day notice on January 19, 2007 for public comments on our proposal to adopt the Final EA prepared by the Corps for the Cunningham Lake Aquatic Habitat Restoration Project. No comments were received.

In consideration of our rules, regulations, and policies related to NEPA compliance for Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration grants; review of the Corps EA and Corps FONSI for the Glenn Cunningham Lake Aquatic Habitat Restoration Project including their evaluation, mitigation, and public review; and the lack of comments on our 15-day public comment period regarding the proposal, I hereby adopt the Corps EA to meet our NEPA compliance responsibilities for the grant proposal described above. Notice of this FONSI will be published in a statewide news release.

APPROVAL:

Signed by Deputy Director – February 8, 2007

Regional Director, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Region 6

Date